

Department of Public Health and Human Services

Public Health & Safety Division ♦ Communicable Disease Control & Prevention Bureau

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SENATE
PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE & SAFETY
Exhibit No. 5
Date 4/8/2015
Bill No. HB 245

Steve Bullock, Governor

Richard H. Oppen, Director

Jim Murphy, Bureau Chief
Communicable Disease Control and Prevention Bureau
Public Health and Safety Division
Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services

Testimony in opposition of HB 245: "AN ACT ESTABLISHING A SMALL HERD EXEMPTION PERMIT AND FEE FOR CERTAIN PRODUCERS OF MILK; REQUIRING THE DEPARTMENT OF LIVESTOCK TO ADOPT RULES TO ADMINISTER SMALL HERD EXEMPTION PERMITS; EXEMPTING CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS FROM PARTICULAR PRODUCTION, USE, AND SALES REQUIREMENTS; MAKING CONSUMERS LIABLE FOR HEALTH ISSUES; AND AMENDING SECTIONS 81-2-102, 81-21-102, 81-21-103, 81-22-101, 81-22-102, 81-22-202, 81-22-303, 81-22-304, 81-22-413, 81-22-415, 81-22-416, 81-22-501, AND 81-23-106, MCA."

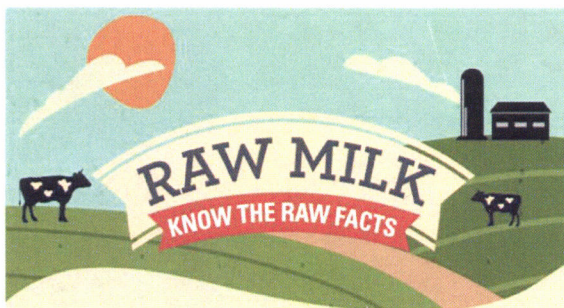
On behalf of the Department of Public Health and Human Services, I am here to express our opposition to HB 245.

Our department deeply respects the beliefs of the bill's sponsor and its proponents and their right to consume the milk produced from their own livestock. However, when we examine the well documented risks of consuming raw milk and compare those with the limited benefits, we cannot support making a product that can be potentially harmful more widely available.

As a state agency created to protect the public health, DPHHS opposes expanding the availability of raw milk for the following reasons (all data comes from the Centers for Disease Control or the Food and Drug Administration):

- 1) Consumption of raw milk is directly associated with disease outbreaks. The Food and Drug Administration has identified at least 10 disease causing bacteria, many of which can cause severe illness and death, in raw milk. The most common bacteria identified include *Campylobacter*, *E. coli* and *Salmonella*.
 - a. Since 1998 at least 93 outbreaks sickening almost 1,900 people, hospitalizing 200 and killing 2 have been directly linked to raw milk. Due to under-reporting or indirect linkages the actual number is estimated to be much higher.
 - b. Consumption of raw milk has been linked with Montana outbreaks- including a recent salmonella outbreak in central Montana sickening 7 and hospitalizing three, including two children. The USDA estimates that each hospitalization for salmonella costs just over \$14,000.
 - c. A person is 150 times more likely to become ill from consuming raw milk than from pastuerized milk.
- 2) At least 17 states ban the sale of raw milk for human consumption, many others allow very limited use while others restrict sales to certain settings.
 - a. 81% of the outbreaks attributed to raw milk occurred in the states that have legalized sales.
 - b. The number of outbreaks has increased in recent years as states expanded the availability of raw milk, from 30 in 2007-09 to 51 in 2010-12.
- 3) The addition of a herdshare-exemption to the bill is also a concern. While many states allow someone to own part of a cow or herd and consume the milk produced there is little detail in the bill about how this would work. However, it is clear that this option would be exempt from any testing which may create additional risks to the person consuming the raw milk. A similar approach in Idaho still requires periodic testing of the milk produced.

Public health officials routinely investigate outbreaks related to other food products and most are not caused by raw milk. Meat products, eggs and vegetables are all vulnerable if not handled properly and are no one is proposing banning their sale. However, it is important to recognize that almost everyone consumes these other products and given their widespread consumption outbreaks are rare. We also try to make sure these products are as safe as they can be and would not support a movement to eat raw meat or eat unwashed vegetables. In an effort to make sure people are informed and can protect themselves we remind you to cook your food, wash your vegetables and please make sure milk available for sale is pasteurized.



Many people choose raw milk thinking it will improve their health, but it can cause serious illness in anyone. Outbreaks linked to raw milk have doubled in the past five years.

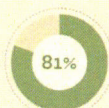


RAW MILK IS BECOMING MORE AVAILABLE

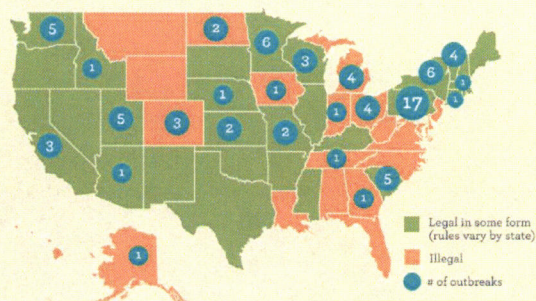


In 2004, selling raw milk was legal in 22 states. By 2011, this increased to 30 states.

Most outbreaks (81%) happened in states where selling raw milk was legal.



RAW MILK OUTBREAKS BY STATE (from 2007-2012)



SOME GROUPS ARE MORE LIKELY TO GET SICK FROM RAW MILK



Children
>>>>>>



of outbreaks reported from 2007-2012 included at least one child under 5 years



Older adults
(65 or older)



People with weakened immune systems
(including people with HIV/AIDS and chronic diseases such as diabetes and cancer)

WHAT IS RAW MILK ANYWAY?



Raw milk has not been pasteurized to kill harmful, disease-causing germs, including bacteria, viruses, and parasites.



Pasteurization is the process of heating milk to 161°F for 15 seconds to kill harmful bacteria.



Before most milk in the U.S. was pasteurized, raw milk was a common source of foodborne illness.

HOLY COW!

RAW MILK OUTBREAKS ARE ON THE RISE IN THE U.S.



150x

The risk of an outbreak caused by raw milk is at least 150 times higher than the risk of an outbreak caused by pasteurized milk.



4x

The average number of outbreaks linked to raw milk was 4 times higher from 2007-2012 compared to 1993-2006.



81

In all, 81 outbreaks in 26 states were linked to raw milk from 2007-2012.

Top germs linked to raw milk outbreaks (from 2007-2012)



Campylobacter
62 outbreaks

E. coli
13 outbreaks

Salmonella
2 outbreaks

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO LOWER YOUR RISK OF GETTING SICK?



Choose **pasteurized** milk and dairy products. Buy and eat products that say "pasteurized" on the label. If in doubt, don't buy it!



Refrigerate **pasteurized** dairy products at 40°F or below.



Throw away any expired product.

BE WISE. ONLY DRINK MILK THAT'S PASTEURIZED!

CS55172



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

For more information on raw milk, please visit
www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/rawmilk